



A 155-mm self-propelled howitzer battery could be the answer to the divisional cavalry squadron's need for dedicated fire support.

from a reinforcing FA brigade (if a brigade is reinforcing). The second option is a quick fire channel to a battalion in direct support (DS) of a maneuver brigade adjacent to the sector or zone in which the squadron is operating. A final option is the division's multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) battery.

Without dedicated artillery for the squadron, the quick fire channel must be established. Given priority on the QFC, the squadron can receive timely fires,

assuming FA positioning within range. The disadvantages associated with the QFC are:

- The squadron must compete with units that may have priority in calls for fire.
- The observer who has priority of fires is usually not the only observer on the quick fire net.
- The fire direction center (FDC) must immediately restrict all other traffic upon receiving a CFF from the priority observer.

that fire support teams assigned to the task force headquarters have another employment option.

Option 1 states that, "The FIST headquarters operates together in the FIST-V to provide fire support to the maneuver company commander. This option allows the fire support officer (FSO) to be at the

• If digital, the FDC must continuously review input queues to ensure immediate action of a quick fire net priority CFF.

• There is no habitual training relationship between the supporting unit and the squadron.

• Positioning of FA assets is determined by the brigade's priorities, resulting in probable gaps in coverage for the cavalry squadron.

• Communications security differences may surface causing communications problems and issues.

If a direct support FA unit is allocated to the squadron, a 155-mm, self-propelled unit is preferred. Speed and flexibility of displacement associated with such a unit better supports the squadron. Munitions such as rocket assisted projectile (RAP) and family of scatterable mines (FASCAM) further enhance the squadron's ability to survive and disengage from the enemy. The only disadvantages are combat service support (CSS) and the lack of habitual training relationship.

The divisional cavalry squadron is the only maneuver force in the division that does not have a habitually associated DS artillery unit. Given the assigned missions, typically large frontages, and the non-linear aspects of future battlefields, the divisional cavalry squadron must have dedicated fire support. A 155-mm, self-propelled howitzer battery (at a minimum) is the ultimate answer and would greatly increase the squadron's survivability and ability to accomplish its mission. Until this becomes possible, an FA battalion from the FA brigade supporting a heavy division must be subassigned the mission of DS to the division cavalry squadron. Again, training toward this lash-up may be difficult, but immediately available FA support is essential.

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FIST-V Employment

There is a new, practical way to employ the fire support team-vehicle (FIST-V). The fire support teams (FISTs) need to be a battalion-level asset. The following discusses the three options listed in *FM 6-30 Observed Fire Procedures* and shows

focal point of all fire support communications within the company zone of action" *FM 6-30*, July 1991, Page 2-3). Compared to the M1 Abrams Tank and the M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle, the poor speed and long set-up time of the FIST-V make even option one difficult to execute. Additionally, the company FIST-V is em-

played in the company battle position during defensive operations or following the company formation during offensive operations. The disadvantage is that when the company becomes engaged in a direct fire fight, so does the FIST-V. When the FIST-V is engaged, the "eyes" of the artillery are closed—or at least they blink.

Option 2 states that "The company FSO or his representative works out of the commander's vehicle. The FIST-V is positioned elsewhere in the company area to optimize its lasing and communications capability" (FM 6-30). The advantage is clear, concise guidance from the commander. "The disadvantage is that the company FSO is removed from the center of fire support activity; his ability to conduct any coordination is severely degraded" (FM 6-30).

Option 3 states that "The third option is not selected by the company FSO but is directed by higher headquarters. The company FSO and the fire support specialist take two AN/PRC 119s [man-pack single-channel ground and airborne system] and the FIST digital message device (DMD) and work from the commander's vehicle. The FIST-V and remaining equipment are used by higher headquarters as a combat observation lasing team (COLT)" (FM 6-30). The advantage is the additional COLT. The disadvantage is this option increases the coordination problems the FSO has in option 2.

I propose a fourth option, one in which all company FSOs and FIST-Vs are attached to the task force battalion headquarters and are under the operational

control of the battalion FSO. The teams are assigned to a position to fight the task force fire plan and given the mission to support the company in that sector of responsibility. The advantages of this option are as follows:

1. Overwatch. Teams can be assigned in pairs while covering the entire battlefield. In offensive operations, the teams can be bounded in pairs, never placing more than one team in direct fire range at any one time. Using the FIST-V in conjunction with dismounted observation posts, perhaps based out of Bradleys, gives the battalion total fire support coverage.

2. Planning. The battalion FSO has four additional planners at his location to help in producing task force fire support documents for the battalion operation order. This gives the company FSOs the maximum time to refine planned targets along with total understanding of the task force commander's intent. FIST teams can get on the ground earlier to identify target refinement and trigger points. In addition, Copperhead planning can take place much sooner, which will help the FA battalion determine cannon battery position areas because observer positions drive the selection of Copperhead engagement areas.

3. Command and Control (C²). The battalion FSO predetermines position areas and is able to track the FIST teams more easily, especially if the teams are employed and maneuver in pairs. It is sometimes difficult for the company FSO

to clear fires prior to sending in a mission because the company commander is usually on his battalion commander's net. Because the battalion FSO is responsible for clearing all fires through the task force commander, he should have direct control of the FIST.

4. Intelligence. FIST-Vs and dismounted operations located to support the task force plan can provide total coverage of the entire battlefield. This keeps the battalion FSO and company commander informed of enemy locations, formations and numbers to enhance the scheme of fire and maneuver. Priority intelligence requirements can be assigned to fire support teams to further support the fight. Company FSOs, as battalion assets, remain focused on the task force mission and are aware of other fire support teams' missions.

The disadvantages to option 4 are that a FIST is not dedicated to each company. The FIST team is removed from the center of company-level operations. In addition, support of the FIST team, such as food, fuel and maintenance, must come from the battalion headquarters.

In conclusion, option 4 is a different way to employ the FIST-V. Of course, there are other solutions. But a combination of the options may be used. Option 4 improves the ability of the fire support team to fight with fires at the Battalion Task Force level.

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	Class Number	Report Date	Start Date	End Date
FY 92	10	20 Sep 92	21 Sep 92	25 Sep 92
FY 93	1	4 Oct 92	5 Oct 92	9 Oct 92
	501	15 Nov 92	16 Nov 92	20 Nov 92
	502	6 Dec 92	7 Dec 92	11 Dec 92
	2	3 Jan 93	4 Jan 93	8 Jan 93
	3	31 Jan 93	1 Feb 93	5 Feb 93
	4	21 Mar 93	22 Mar 93	26 Mar 93
	5	18 Apr 93	19 Apr 93	23 Apr 93
	6	2 May 93	3 May 93	7 May 93
	8	23 May 93	24 May 93	28 May 93
	9	20 Jun 93	21 Jun 93	25 Jun 93
	503	25 Jul 93	26 Jul 93	30 Jul 93
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